

The Official Community Newsletter for Collin College



# CONNECTION

Summer 2013

## Collin College named Presidential Award finalist

Officials in Washington, D.C. named Collin College a Presidential Award finalist for the 2013 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

The Presidential Award, administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), is the highest honor a college or university can receive for its exemplary commitment to volunteering, service-learning and civic engagement. Collin College is one of only two community colleges recognized.

"College students are a powerful force and have a great deal to give our country and community through service and civic engagement," Collin College District President Cary A. Israel said. "We commend all the Collin College students who made this honor possible, as well as the Board of Trustees, faculty, administrators, staff and local organizations who worked together to embrace this critical issue for our college and community."

CNCS chose 14 Presidential Award finalists and five winners along with 690 other colleges and universities on the Honor Roll.



Collin College Center for Scholarly and Civic Engagement Director Terry Hockenbrough said community involvement is a way of life at Collin College.

"Collin College is dedicated to excellence, upholding core values and giving back to the community through service learning, volunteerism, research and civic engagement," she said. "Last year, students, faculty and staff contributed more than 30,000 hours of service, including 21,532 hours of service learning."

Service Learning offers students valuable experiential learning through service projects in a credit-bearing class that benefit the community. This, along with volunteer and civic engagement projects through student organizations and campus groups, brings much-needed help to local organizations and individuals in need.

To learn more about Collin College's civic engagement initiatives, visit [www.collin.edu/academics/csce/](http://www.collin.edu/academics/csce/).

### From rock-climbing to floor-tile patterns:

## Collin College students, faculty apply research principles to real world



Dominating in extreme sports was not **Nathan Williamson's** only goal as he dropped more than 12,000 feet from the door of a plane and navigated tall, steep mountains by hand and foot. Adding science to his favorite pastime, the physics student was collecting data for a research project at Collin College.

In his research, Williamson investigated the differential relationship between how acceleration, velocity and position are measured and explored in adventure sports.

Like Williamson, many other Collin College students and faculty pursue research at the college in areas that reflect their own passions, from the creation of software and the dynamics of aviation, to the sequencing of genetic structures and investigation into post-apocalyptic TV programming.

Higher education research serves as the foundation for countless corporate innovations. In 2009, the National Science Foundation found that academic institutions performed 53 percent of the nation's total basic research. At universities,



Amy Glazier

many assistantship and faculty positions are based on research. While Collin College students and faculty are not required to conduct research in all classes, they say it's invaluable.

"I have a richer understanding of math and science beyond my coursework because of my involvement in research," said student **Amy Glazier**.

Mathematics Professor Dr. Valeria Antohe believes that research sparks an element of learning that simply can't be absorbed in a classroom. Most of the research she sees

emphasizes the relationship of the study materials to the real world, much like Glazier's.

### FACULTY MENTORSHIP

Glazier joined force with Dr. Antohe to explore how math can be used to model artistic patterns in floor tile design. Using polynomial, trigonometric and other mathematical functions, Glazier created designs ranging from sweeping abstract curves and starbursts to snowflakes. She also used integral calculus to find areas enclosed by the curves of each pattern to determine the cost to produce each tile.

"I loved working on this project because it made mathematics into something tangible and beautiful I could see uses for in the real world," described Glazier.

Although research can seem like a huge feat in the beginning, student researchers do not go at it alone. In Glazier's case, Dr. Antohe was there to partner and assist every step of the way, and Glazier believes researching with Dr. Antohe will give her a unique advantage when she begins at a university.

### DEVELOPING FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

**Marcello Monterrosa** can attest to that. After working on research with Dr. Bridgette Kirkpatrick and Dr. Collin Thomas in 2011 through Collin College's Center for Advanced Study in Math and



Marcello Monterrosa

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[www.collin.edu/connection](http://www.collin.edu/connection)

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# Where are they NOW?

The vein of history runs from small towns to high peaks:

## Alumnus preserves the past for a better future



**MIKE ADAY**  
Associate of Arts, Collin College  
Bachelor of Arts, Historical Studies, The University of Texas at Dallas  
Master of Arts, University of Texas at Arlington  
Archives Technician, National Park Service, Yosemite National Park

**Mike Aday** held the yellowed, century-and-a-half-old paper in his hands, and time stopped. He sucked in air. He could feel his heart pounding. The 1860's cotton-fiber sheet did not prepare him for the power of the words indelibly branded in iron ink. However, the fact that this ferrous-based liquid had rusted holes into the still very legible document echoed the hollowness he felt inside.

"I held the receipt for the sale of a slave in my hand. This paper represented the sale of a *human* life. You have to sit down and take a deep breath and think of the significance of that. It shocked me," he said, choking on his words.

"It's a moment in time that people don't think exists in Texas. When you think about slavery, you think of the Deep South. What most people don't realize is that on the eve of the Civil War, Texas, per capita, had as many or more slaves as the state of Virginia," Aday said.

An historian working on the Texas A&M Commerce HeirLoom project, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Aday found three more receipts for slaves in towns like Honey Grove Texas, less than 60 miles from McKinney. He traveled to rural libraries, museums, historical and genealogical societies and digitized 5,000 historical documents and photographs, uploading to a database for worldwide access. He also trained people to use the software, so they could continue to preserve their local history.

"According to legend, Honey Grove was named after Davy Crockett who stopped there on his way to San Antonio. A lot of honeybees built colonies in the grove where he stayed. Back then to make paper, people pounded cotton and poured it into a mush. That's one of the reasons we still have these documents. They are more permanent than the paper we use now. It was gratifying to take the history of these little Texas towns and make them available to everyone around the world."

Aday began his pursuit of a career in history at Collin College. He earned an Associate of Arts degree from the college in 2005, a bachelor's degree in historical studies from The University of Texas at Dallas in 2007 and a master's degree in history with an archival administration concentration from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2010.

"My experience at Collin College did so much to prepare me for graduate school. The first semester, I took a class from Dr. Kyle Wilkison,

and I knew immediately that I was in the right place. He and Dr. Joan Jenkins enhanced my critical thinking skills. They challenged students, had high expectations for thoughtful discourse and expected high-level work."

As a Collin College student, Aday created text for a plaque in a permanent exhibit at the Heritage Farmstead Museum in Plano. Prior to leaving the college, he received the Plano Conservancy for Historical Preservation Scholarship.

"I tell people up front that I am proud to have attended Collin College. The professors at Collin are engaged with their students. I developed relationships with the faculty that I still maintain to this day."

Aday's extensive resume includes the city of Dallas, the Dallas Museum of Art and the Dallas Firefighters Museum. He was also the curatorial assistant at Dallas Heritage Village, where he was responsible for a 27,000-item artifact collection. Recently, he traded the flat, Texas topography for glaciers, granite and California's High Sierra.

Today, he is an archives technician with the National Parks Service at Yosemite National Park. With more than four million visitors annually from all over the globe and numerous departments with years of paperwork, Aday's job is daunting. Recently, he had the opportunity to view an old map of the valley, which he dated at about 1940. It included campsites that no longer exist and the location of the Native American Indian village of the Miwok Paiute tribe. With its hand-drawn craftsmanship, the map is a work of art in Aday's eyes, and the sight of it sent his mind reeling through the history of the area.

"Yosemite was 'discovered' by the white settlers. In 1852, the U.S. Army chased groups of Indians who had attacked a mining camp. The Indians fled into the valley, and the Army chased them into what is now called Yosemite," he said.

Whether he is making discoveries to share with the rest of the world in his capacity as an archivist or stepping outside the office into the very nature he is trying to preserve for all eternity, Aday is reveling in his new surroundings.

"We live in the foothills of the Sierra Mountains. There is no light pollution. I stood 10 feet from a lynx. The deer come down every evening. There's the Conifer forest and Black Oak Pine, Yosemite Falls and El Capitan and Half Dome, the huge granite features that are destinations for rock climbers from around the world. It is a breathtaking experience and a dream destination."

Exploring areas of study:

## Lessons from history create a guide and armor for the future

Eager to make her mark on the world, Collin College student **Moriah Walton** said a history degree is her best bet at impacting the future.

"Everything that happens today is impacted by what happened yesterday," Walton said.

Her perspective is exactly what Collin College history professors are hoping to share with the remainder of their students.

Dr. Keith Volanto, history department chair at the Spring Creek Campus, said knowledge of history provides protection for educated citizens.

"Just as someone signing a basic financial contract would be at the mercy of whoever they were dealing with if they had no knowledge of basic finance and statistics, people without basic historical knowledge are at the mercy of any filmmaker, politician or businessman who intends to use that person's historical ignorance against them," Dr. Volanto said.

Once Collin College history professors have students in the classroom, it is time to fight the battle against stereotypes of a boring, purposeless subject and create an armor of knowledge for their futures. Collin professors point out to students that while the past is not changing, an individual's own background affects how they view history. It is, in fact, dynamic.

"Every semester in class somebody will, because of their own personal experiences, look at something a little bit differently," said Wendy Gunderson, professor of history. "History doesn't happen in a vacuum. It continues to evolve and our interpretations of it continue to evolve."

"You can relate things that happened years earlier to what's going on today," Gunderson said. "For example, during an election year, we look at policies being discussed and tie them in with the past. Many people don't realize that discussion regarding mandated healthcare isn't something new."

“Just as someone signing a basic financial contract would be at the mercy of whoever they were dealing with if they had no knowledge of basic finance and statistics, people without basic historical knowledge are at the mercy of any filmmaker, politician or businessman who intends to use that person's historical ignorance against them.”

It is that type of learning environment that encouraged Walton to attend Collin College despite the full ride offered from Southern Methodist University.

"I met the professors here and saw the passion they had for their students," Walton said. "My professors treat me like a fellow researcher. I go to a lot of the history forums here on campus, and I never feel like I can't ask questions or be curious. They make it personable."

Gunderson tries to convey the importance of history to students from the first day of class. She asks her students why they are attending Collin College, and typically, students mention a number of factors.

"It is just like that with history," Gunderson said. "Things don't happen because of one reason. We don't go to war because of just one thing. There are many different events that lead up to it."

Giving personal examples of how he has applied historical knowledge in making personal decisions or in coming to conclusions about what's going on in the world is an important part of Dr. Volanto's teaching.

"A firm background in history really helps you understand how the world works today," Dr. Volanto said.

Dr. Volanto and Professor Gunderson agree that career opportunities are plentiful for individuals who pursue history. Skills learned from history courses, like the ability to read and sift through a lot of material, analyze it, synthesize it and come up with conclusions are qualities needed in almost every profession. (See related story above.)

From working as a curator or teacher, to researching in the national archives, history majors have many options. In addition, graduate or law school allows for more specialization. Professors from the Collin College history department cite history majors who now work as CIA analysts, journalists and at major accounting firms.

History, to Walton and the faculty at Collin College, is more than mere memorization. It's an interesting way of learning career skills, such as critical thinking and researching, while creating an armor for the future. "It is true about being doomed to repeat history if you don't learn from it," Walton said. "I've found that you can't figure out where you're going unless you know where you are, and you can't know where you are unless you know where you came from."



## Student & Alumni HIGHLIGHTS



Collin College's chapter of **Phi Theta Kappa** honor society recently won several international and Texas regional awards. The chapter won three international awards including an honor as a Top 100 chapter. Regional honors included the Pinnacle Award, Texas Top Chapter Award, Award of Distinction for Honors in Action Project, Five Star Chapter Development Award and Poster Project Award as well as special honors for **Vashtai Kekich**, Member Hall of Honor. In addition, four chapter members reached five star level membership, the highest status for membership with Phi Theta Kappa—President **Richard Pearce**, Vice President of Scholarship **Judy Ma**, Vice President of Service **Roberto Monroy** and Historian **Tiffany Hernandez**.

The Collin Chapter of **Psi Beta** national psychology honor society won the 2012 Chapter Excellence Award from National Psi Beta.

For the first time in Collin College athletic history, the **Lady Cougar's Basketball Team** was ranked in the top 25 in the National Junior College Athletic Association's national polls.

The **Collin College United Nations Team** won two national awards this spring in New York. Students **Kris Phillips** and **Kirsten Bustamante** won "Outstanding Representation in a Committee" for their representation of the delegation from Seychelles. Collin College was the only community college to win in this category. The second award was for Distinguished Delegation.

The American Respiratory Care Foundation (ARCF) presented **Adriana Cheteles** with the William W. Burgin, Jr., MD Education Recognition Award, which includes a \$5,000 scholarship. ARCF also selected **Janet Vadakkan** for the Jimmy A. Young Memorial Education Recognition Award and \$1,000 scholarship.



## Collin College students, faculty apply research principles continued from page 1

Natural Sciences (CASMNS), Monterrosa earned an internship with the Bridges program at Texas Woman's University (TWU). Monterrosa's CASMNS study of the symbiotic relationship between paramecium Bursaria and Chlorella was a big step forward for a career in biotechnology.

"I will remember this time as the most interesting and productive activity I ever had that early in my academic career," said Monterrosa, who currently is working on a second research project at TWU. "The experience of CASMNS research gave me the technical edge I needed to be successful."

Two years ago, three other Collin College CASMNS students also found that edge when they discovered an asteroid between Mars and Jupiter. This celebrated discovery was accomplished with the aid of Dr. Mike Broyles and 2012 Texas Professor of the Year Dr. Greg Sherman.

Other past CASMNS research includes explorations such as the study of "Population Genetics of Wintergrape Fern," "Selective extraction of Cu<sup>2+</sup> in the presence of Fe<sup>2+</sup>," "Co<sup>2+</sup> and Ni<sup>2+</sup>," "Copper in Drinking Water" and "Mathematical Models of Drug Concentration in the Bloodstream."

### PUBLICATION AND PRESENTATION

According to Dr. Michael Schueth, a Collin College English professor, "The experience of presenting at a conference also makes students understand their research in a whole new way.



It gives them confidence to know their research has an audience, and they can fully engage in the academic experience."

Collin College hosts an annual Undergraduate

Interdisciplinary Student Research Conference, so students can showcase research papers and experiments—from biology, communication studies and media to philosophy, physics and nursing—in a professional environment.

"The purpose of the conference is to help students explore research they are proud of," explained Jenny Warren, Collin College professor of Communication Studies and chair of the conference. "When students achieve, they should be allowed to discuss their findings with others."

In doing so, not only do students gain confidence, but they also stand out in a pile of applications for transfer colleges and universities.

Research can also create camaraderie and professional interaction through organizations such as Psi Beta National Honor Society for psychology.

Jennifer Brooks, who teaches psychology at Collin College and serves as advisor for Psi Beta, said research is a core component to Psi Beta's mission.

"Psi Beta research group members gain valuable professional experience through presentations at local and regional conferences, as well as opportunities for networking with students and faculty from other institutions," Professor Brooks said. Professor Brooks was also Texas Professor of the Year in 2006.

As Dr. Schueth said, "One of the best ways for students to stand out is through academic experiences most undergraduates are not exposed to within the first two years."

Whether the goal is preparation for a university bachelor's program with dreams of graduate school or completing an associate degree and entering the job market, the knowledge, skills and relationships developed through research opportunities at Collin College give students an advantage.

## Faculty & Staff HIGHLIGHTS



Mac Hendricks

Chairman of the Board of Trustees **Mac Hendricks** participated on a Young American Voters Foundation panel with other officials from surrounding cities to discuss the structure of local government, the role of elected officials and the importance of continued leadership and community involvement.

**Cary A. Israel**, district president of Collin College, spoke to numerous business and community groups such as the Food Sales Association and the Golden Corridor Republican Women.



Cary A. Israel

Professor **Jennifer O'Loughlin-Brooks** received the Virginia Staudt Sexton National Faculty Advisor Award for Psi Beta national psychology honor society.



Jeff Allen

Women's Basketball Coach **Jeff Allen** was selected as a finalist for the 2013 Russell Athletic/Women's Basketball Coaches Association Junior/Community College National Coach of the Year. Coach Allen is one of eight finalists from across the nation.

Chemistry Professor **Dr. Amina El-Ashmawy** was invited to collaborate with colleagues from the University of California at Los Angeles and the University of Pennsylvania on a National Science Foundation project studying software in mathematics and chemistry to optimize learning for individual students. One of the project's target populations is community college students enrolled in chemistry courses.

Professor of Mathematics **Raja Khoury** was elected as state secretary for the Texas Community College Teachers Association.



Raja Khoury

Phi Theta Kappa awarded Developmental Math Professor **Brandy Jumper** an international Paragon Award for New Advisors. PTK also named Jumper to the Texas Distinguished Advisor Hall of Honor and selected **Judy James**, executive assistant for teaching and learning, for the Friend of Texas Appreciation Award.



Brandy Jumper

History Professors **Keith Volanto** and **Kyle Wilkison** presented at the Texas State Historical Association's Dallas Teachers' Conference. Dr. Wilkison was the opening keynote speaker presenting "Texas History Revisited: Cowboys v. Child Cotton Pickers" while Dr. Volanto's presentation was titled "The Exciting First Half of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Texas History."

Humanities Professor **Dallie Clark** successfully defended her dissertation titled, "Lost [or Gained] in Translation: The Art of the Handwritten Letter in the Digital Age," and has received her Ph.D. from The University of Texas at Dallas.



# Did you KNOW...



**50% MORE LIKELY TO EARN A DEGREE**

Texas students who complete a college course during high school ("dual credit" courses) are **50%** more likely to earn a college degree. Nearly **2,700** students from local ISDs take dual credit course at Collin College.

(Source: Job for the Future report, October, 2012)

**35.2 MILLION**

Americans have completed an associate degree.

(Source: USA Today, November 2012)

**1 1/2 NEARLY HALF**

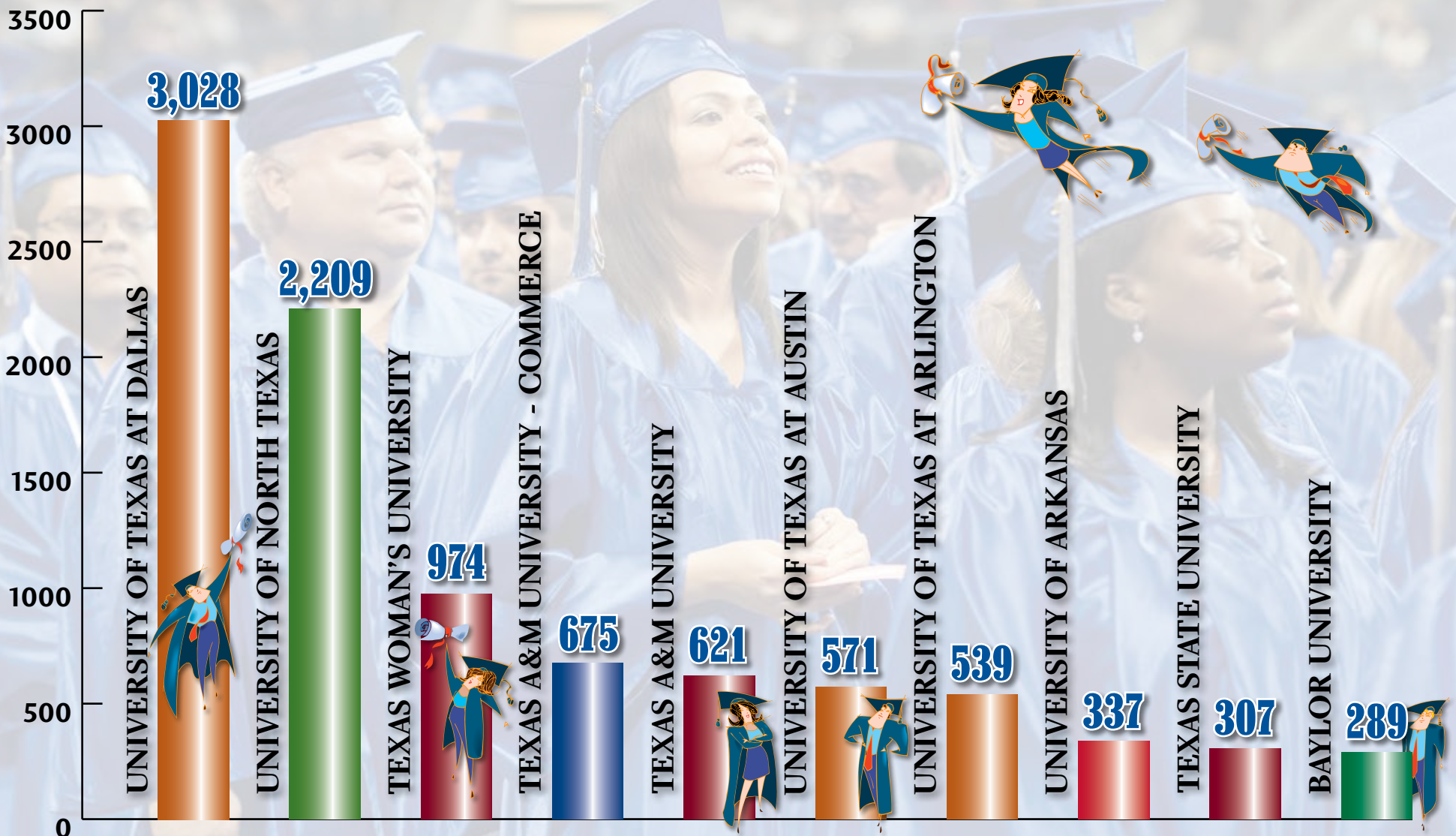
of all U.S. undergraduates attend community college.

(Source: American Association of Community Colleges)



## TOP 10 Transfer Universities

*Institutions to which Collin College students transfer*



Source: Collin College Banner Student System and the National Student Clearinghouse.

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